

SHOW-ME ROCKHOUNDS

AUGUST 2006 NEWSLETTER

Dues are \$10.00 per family and \$5.00 for individual memberships. Show-Me Rockhounds is a non-profit organization affiliated with the Association of Earth Science Clubs of Greater Kansas City, Inc. and the Mid-West Federation of Mineralogical Societies. Monthly club meetings are at the Plaza Library in the Large meeting room. Our purpose is to further the study and awareness of the Earth Sciences amongst our membership and the public.

OFFICERS: Martin Mueller, President; Rolland Smith Vice-President
Sharon Penner, Treasurer; Secretary & newsletter, Carol Ferguson.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

This heat can slow many projects down, yet we are to remember that the heat will not last the full summer. It looks like the trip to Indiana is off, I have not heard from anyone on planning to meet up at Bedford. I am not surprised that with a trip of that size, the distance to gas ratio, the heat, and the time to travel, can become too much for us. I will be bringing a selection of my collection of fossils I have picked up out east in Indiana to our meeting.

We are looking forward to the Association of Earth Science Clubs' picnic, on Aug. 27TH. I plan to bring some llanite slabs; an uncommon igneous rock. Llanite comes from the Llanna Mountain in Texas where collecting is now restricted (less the mountain is carried away) on these dark colored rocks with pale blue phenocrysts of feldspar much like labradorite or the Norwegian feldspars that are made into flashy cabochons. I will be donating a couple for the silent auction and have several more for swap material. How about you? Do you have extra fossils or lapidary rough to bring, may be some yard rock?

Two items up in the air are the Sept. Denver gem and mineral show and the Oct. Friends of Mineralogy field trip. The Denver show the 14th through the 17th is just north of I-70 on I-25 and it fills up four to five hotels besides the main convention center. Kansas City rock hounds have used this show as a stepping stone to field trips before or after that weekend for years although I and Charley haven't been out there since 2001. Trips out had been as far north as the Black Hills and then there are the areas up in the Rocky Mountains. The October trip is sponsored by the Friends of Mineralogy and the current plans are to collect in Nebraska and Kansas with more information to come on that.

I hope to see you the 15th and then the following weekend at Carol's rock sale.
Sincerely Marty

Notes from the July meeting from Sharon:

Frank, Martin, Rolland, Stu, new member Ed Skelly, & I were at the meeting.

Rolland's presentation on "How fossils form" was excellent.

Martin is planning a field trip to Indiana the first weekend in August. He handed out a map and a page containing the "General Stratigraphic Column of the Paleozoic Rocks in Indiana." If anyone is interested they should contact Martin.

Martin also handed out flyers and coupons for the Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show on September 9-10, 2006 sponsored by the Sac & Fox Lapidary Club of Fairfield, Iowa.

The show will be at the Jefferson County Fairgrounds on U.S Highway 34, West Edge of Town, Fairfield Iowa. Hours: Saturday 9 AM - 6 PM; Sunday 10 AM - 5 PM.

Per Rolland: August Program: Paleobotany .

August Fossil of the month: *CARDIOCARPUS*Cordaite seed

Calendar of Events:

August 12-13 9am-5pm Ozark Mountain Gem & Mineral Show Finley River Park @ 1075 N. Riverside RD Eddie Maples 417-725-3001 or Floyd Carpenter @ 417-823-3800

August 15 TUES Show Me Rockhounds @ 7pm at the Plaza Library

Aug. 19-20 Greater St Louis Association of Earth Sciences Show @ St Charles Convention Center 1001 Veterans Memorial Pkwy; St. Charles, MO 10am-6pm

Aug. 27 Association Picnic Antioch Park FUN FOOD FELLOWSHIP SWAP!
See flyer in this newsletter

Sept 15-17 Denver Gem & Mineral & Fossil Show; Denver Merchandise Mart 451 E. 58th Ave www.denvermineralshow.com for more information

Sept 15-17 Lincoln Swap in Lincoln, MO at the City Park for more info call Linville Harms at 660-827-4143---Mozarkite Field trips!

Sept 23-24 Tri-State Gem & Mineral Annual Swap Joplin Museum Complex in Schifferdecker Park. Call 417-623-1180 for more information.

Oct 7-8 Omaha, Nebraska Gem & Mineral Show Westside Community Center @ 108th & Grover St in Omaha; call Tim @402-397-9606 or www.nerockgem.org

Oct 14-15 Topeka Show in Topeka, KS @ Kansas ExpoCenter 17th & Topeka Blvd email for more info Rock2plate@aol.com

Oct 28-29 Tulsa Gem & Mineral Show Expo Center Harvard & Yale on 21st St Richard Jaeger 918-481-0249 or Rjgrsci@aol.com

The Association of Earth Science Clubs of Greater Kansas City

Pot Luck Picnic

with

Rock for Rock Swap

and

Silent Auction Tables

for club fund raising

Sunday, August 27, 2006

Swap starting - 9:30 a.m.

Lunch - 1:00 p.m.

Antioch Park, Shelter #3

6501 Antioch Road, Shawnee Mission, KS 66202

Bring two side dishes

Bring Your Own Table

The Association will provide:

meat, drinks & utensils

For more swap information:

Call Martin Mueller 816-333-2328

DESERTS

Whenever we think of deserts, we usually picture a really hot place where the sun is blazing down and there is no water. In reality, there are four different kinds of deserts ranging from the blazing hot Sahara to the frozen wasteland of Antarctica. Deserts are found on every continent. The only thing they have in common is that they receive less than ten inches of rain a year.

Four factors influence the formation of deserts. The most important one is high pressure. This type of desert is usually found between 15 degrees and 30 degrees latitude. Back at the equator, the air is heated and rises. Then it cools, condenses and rains before it sinks back down toward the earth. Because the air mass has already lost its moisture, no clouds form and no rain falls. The Sahara is an example of a high-pressure desert.

Secondly, and a very different high-pressure type of desert is found at the South Pole. Antarctica is the driest place in the world. It is even drier than the Sahara. It is so cold there that the air is unable to hold any moisture. Cold up-welling ocean currents along the western coasts of continents cause this second type of desert. Here the air is so cool that it won't hold much moisture and no rain reaches the land.

The third cause of a desert is the rain shadow effect. The Mojave and Death Valley are the rain shadow of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. As the air tries to rise and get over the mountains, it cools, condenses and rains on the western side of the mountain. By the time the air gets over, no moisture is left.

The fourth and last type desert is found in the middle of continents. By the time the air mass reaches here, most of its moisture has already been lost so a desert forms. The Gobi desert in China and the Australian deserts form this way.

Wind and water are the main forces that sculpt the deserts. During the few storms that do occur in deserts, water, moving with great force, carries soil, rocks and other debris and dumps it in cone shaped alluvial fans. This is a great place to go rock hunting.

Wind is responsible for the beautiful sand dunes found in most deserts. Bryce Canyon in Utah was formed from huge dunes piled up by the wind 200 million years ago. Wind has since eroded the sandstone layers into dramatic forms. Many of our beautiful land formations out west were formed this way. Via Rockwood Rockhound News 12/98

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The Simplest Gem : The Diamond is the simplest gem - the chemical composition being all of carbon and crystalized isometrically.

The Most Complex : Tourmaline is the most complex. It is said that tourmaline's chemistry is more like a doctor's prescription than the makings of a respectable material.

Kansas Stone Fence Posts

Miles and miles of light tan, brown-streaked stone fenceposts are an attractive addition to the landscape of the Smoky Hills region of North Central Kansas. They are a tribute to the resourcefulness of the area's early day families, faced with the need for fences and no available wooden posts.

The rock that is the source of these two-toned stone fenceposts lies near the surface of many places in a 25 mile wide strip from Washington County to Ford County, Kansas. Along valleys and across plains this strip zigzags along the Kansas prairie toward the southwest. Geologists have named the stone "Fencepost Limestone" and identified it as a bed of the Greenhorn Limestone of Cretaceous Age, a geologic period of more than 60 million years ago.

When freshly quarried, limestone from this 6 - 12 inch bed is relatively soft. After prolonged exposure to air, it hardens. Discovering that the limestone could easily be split, sawed, drilled, or notched while soft, the early settlers of north central Kansas began quarrying the rock for fence posts. The limestone was quarried by removing the overlying soil, boring holes into the rock, and then splitting it off into slabs of a convenient length or width. A sideline business was thus developed for some of the industrious pioneers who sold the posts for around 25 cents each. With no timber available, the business was brisk.

Most of the stone fenceposts were put down prior to 1900, and it was in this period that the use was the greatest. Even after the turn of the century, the use of stone fenceposts continued, due to their durable nature. By the 1920's because of improved transportation facilities, wooden fenceposts became available at lower and lower cost. The price of the stone fenceposts continued, but the rising cost forced them off the market as a commercial venture. By 1930 the price had risen to \$1 per post.

During the great depression that followed, the posts made of limestone made a small comeback, but died out again at the return of our economy to wealth. A wooden fencepost again became the cheaper to use.

The buff-colored stone fenceposts have proven durable, and many of them are still standing to this day in the spot where erected years ago. They have resisted droughts, storms, grasshopper invasions, and the ravages of nature. They are still very much a part of the landscape in the Smoky Hills region. An estimated 30 - 40 thousand miles of the stone fenceposts can be traced southwestward from Washington County to Ford County through the Smoky Hill area. They have become a trademark of this high plains region. Rockhounds Pow Wow Bulletin, via Rock Rollers 4/85

The World's Largest and Oldest Meteorite

The world's largest and oldest meteorite has been discovered in China near the northeast city of Shenyang. The meteorite, locally called Haushita Hill, is estimated to be 4.5 to 4.6 billion years old and fell to earth 1.9 billion years ago. The meteorite mound is 600 feet long, 250 feet wide and about 300 feet deep. It weighs about 2 million tons and is covered with granite. The meteorite is older than any natural earth rock. The site is planned to be a state protected nature reserve. Northwest Newsletter 10/00 via Del Air Bulletin 6/01 via Golden Spike News 8/01

Volcano Yields Gold

Volcanoes ordinarily produce a molten material called magma and a nasty concoction of hydrochloric acid, hydrofluoric and other deadly gases. At Galeras, an active volcano in Colombia, gold is being produced. When it's erupting, Galeras also exhales through its vents a pound of gold into the air each day. Furthermore, the volcano formed a vein of quartz containing gold. The high-grade vein yields about eight ounces of gold per ton. Although gold has been found in other volcanoes, Galeras yields about 100 times more gold than any other active volcano.

The gold-bearing vein at the base of the 14,000 foot volcano was discovered when a guide showed it to a scientist. A sample of the vein was dated and found to be about 560,000 years old. This suggests Galeras has been expelling gold since it's beginning. The gold is in solution in the volcano's gases and cannot be collected.

Galeras is an active volcano — in 1933 it killed nine people, six of them earth scientists, during a deadly eruption. Access has been restricted, but geologists continue to study Galeras because they have the opportunity to see an actual model of gold ores being emplaced in rock. via *Rockatier* 12/99

Cloth Of Gold

Until the Middle Ages, underwater divers near the Mediterranean Coast line collected golden strands from the pen shell mollusk which used the strands to hold itself in place. Called "byssus", these strands were woven into a luxury textile "cloth of gold" and made into ladies' gloves so fine that a pair could be packed into an empty walnut shell. Examples of this lost art exist in some museums, where the cloth retains its color and softness. Hard Rock News via Ft Lewis Rock Club News 8/01